AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR

WEEKLY NEWS SERVICE

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The A. F. of L. Weekly News Service gives a brief summary of important matters affecting labor, occurring in the industrial, legislative and judicial fields, and such other information that will benefit the trade union movement.

Quick believers need broad shoulders.—George Herbert.

TRADE UNIONISM IS HIGH MORALITY

The Department of the Treasury refused a request of the Fall River (Mass.) Central Labor Union that a contractor be required to comply with trade union conditions in the erection of a post office building.

The purpose of the law "is to avoid favoritism and to secure freer competition," treasury officials said. Attention is called to a similar decision by Secretary of the Treasury McAdoo on November 16, 1916.

"To secure freer competition" sounds brave. It will attract the unthinking, but logically it leads to sweatshop conditions and prison contract labor.

If this is incorrect, who will decide where the dividing line shall be drawn?

Organized labor demands recognition and support by society because it is a barrier to conditions that debase workers.

The government never avoids "favoritism" in selecting material for its public buildings. It is impossible to do otherwise, as durability and an artistic effect must be considered.

But when labor is involved, the wildest competition is permitted, regardless of its effect on the home and society in general.

The government, instead of encouraging the highest wage that will serve as a model for private employers, takes contrary action.

Government officials are not to be blamed for this position. They but reflect public standards that are no longer accepted by thinking individuals.

When our ethical standards are higher, the public will support representatives who insist that the human element in these buildings must not be ignored.

Cheap material can be replaced, but cheap labor damages our social structure. Its consequences are found in the homes and schools, in disease and shortened life.

It is not "favoritism" if our national morality calls for the highest living standards for workers employed in the erection of public buildings, and for employes who work in these buildings after they are completed.

Neither would it be "favoritism" if our national morality recognized the trade unions as the one force that has established these standards.

Agitation and education by organized labor will hasten the day when society rejects the theory of competition between wage workers.

Churchmen Favor 5-Day Week; Say Better Social Order Certain

New York, Aug. 4.—Science has accomplished the impossible and dreams of a better social order can no longer be dismissed as the impracticable objectives of sentimentalists, says the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in a Labor Sunday message prepared by the Council's Commission on the Church and Social Order.

The five-day week in certain industries is possible because of machinery, new power resources, scientific management and the growing efficiency of labor, the churchmen say.

"A score of years ago the churches expressed the ideals of religion in their bearing on social and industrial relations. These ideals include abolition of child labor, protective regulations for women in industry; abatement and prevention of poverty; protection of workers from dangerous machinery, from occupational diseases and from enforced unemployment; right to organize; arbitration and conciliation; gradual and reasonable reduction of hours of labor to the lowest practicable point; a living wage as a minimum in every industry and the highest wage that each industry can afford; a new emphasis upon the application of Christian principles to the acquisition and use of property and the most equitable division of the product of industry that can ultimately be devised.

"Certain phases of the industrial problem press for immediate attention," the churchmen say. "The past year has seen a serious condition of unemployment. The situation has been not less but more challenging because of a condition of prosperity for many, while a very large number of men were out of work. The Department of Labor has estimated that there were nearly 2,000,000 fewer persons employed in January of this year than in January, 1925. Since the so-called normal unemployment is not less than 1,000,000, this government estimate means that at least 3,000,000 workers must have been unemployed during the past winter. Such a condition is economically unsound and intolerable from the point of view of Christian brotherhood."

ITALIAN SCHOOLS ORDERED BY DUCE

Rome, Aug. 4.—Dictator Mussolini orders Italians living in foreign countries to send their children to Italian schools. Refusal to obey will debar the parents from ever returning even for a visit to their home country.

Mussolini's order is in line with his policy of compelling all Italians to remain Italians and not become citizens of the land of their adoption.

Fascist branches throughout the world, under control of the Italian government, enforce this order by reporting disobedience to the dictator.

SENATE MAY PROBE CABINET APPOINTEE

Washington, Aug. 4.—President Coolidge's appointment of Roy O. West of Chicago as Secretary of the Interior, to succeed Hubert Work, will probably be scrutinized by the Senate when that body convenes next December. Before the appointment is ratified the power trust issue may be reopened.

West was a witness before Senator James A. Reed's committee in Chicago on June 27, 1926, when the election of Frank L. Smith as Senator from Illinois was probed.

Samuel Insull, utilities magnate, had testified he gave $125,000 to the campaign of Smith who at the time was head of the Illinois public utilities commission. Smith was later refused admission to the Senate.

In those hearings West testified that he was closely associated with Insull.

The Secretary of the Interior has control of all Indian power sites and can grant rights-of-way to power companies across public land. He is also a member of the Federal Power Commission which grants licenses to private companies for water power sites and will have a voice in the proposed Boulder Dam across the Colorado River.

FIRE FIGHTING FIRM WARS ON MACHINISTS

Elmira, N. Y., Aug. 4.—The Central Trades and Labor Assembly protests against the local Chamber of Commerce defense of the American La-France Fire Engine Company in its war on the Machinists' union. The company manufactures fire apparatus, and the unionists request organization of labor everywhere to acquaint their city officials with the union attack.

"The members of the International Association of Machinists," the unionists state, "were negotiating with this company for nearly a year in an effort to avoid an open break, only to be told by company officials that they will operate their plant on the anti-union basis. The company refused to deal with the machinists' committee or representatives.

"The shops are manned by strike-breakers living in the premises. Will your city get good fire protection from apparatus built by this class of labor? Is your money as taxpayers to be spent to fight your fellow unionists in Elmira?"

The trade unionists insist that Elmira business men ignore the long peace campaign by citizens who see their places filled by imported strike-breakers. Linotype sheet metal workers and molders have also been discharged.

ABSENTEES VOTED IN SENATE CONTEST

Philadelphia, Aug. 4.—Testifying before the Senate committee on the Vare-Wilson senatorial contest, one witness said that the ballots were counted in the Fifth division of the First ward at noon, seven hours before the polls closed.

He said ballots were placed in the box in the names of men and women who had not put in an appearance. The witness indicated that it was necessary to make the ballots come up to the totals which previously had been arranged.

The contest was brought by William B. Wilson, Democrat, who charges that William S. Vare, Republican, was elected United States Senator by fraud. Wilson was formerly secretary-treasurer of the United Mine Workers and was the first head of the Department of Labor in President Wilson's cabinet.

FAVOR POLICE PENSIONS

St. Louis, Aug. 4.—Missouri trade unionists are supporting a police pension bill, which will be submitted to the referendum at the November election.

Citizens of this state favored a constitutional amendment authorizing the law by a majority of 246,184 in 1926, but the state legislature failed to act.

WORKER EXPOSES PLOT TO AID PRISON LABOR

Des Moines, Iowa, Aug. 4.—John C. Lewis, president Iowa Federation of Labor, refuses to join with the Board of Control of State Institutions in a star chamber meeting to whitewash prison contract labor practices.

The trade union official has led organized labor's attack against the board because of violations of the prison contract law. The board notified Lewis to appear and give testimony in the matter, but Lewis declined after he was refused the privilege of having a stenographer or an attorney. The meeting was to be held behind closed doors.

"We will be glad to present before the proper tribunal," said Lewis, "all the evidence we have or may obtain as to the making of said contract. We do not propose to permit you, in star chamber, secretly created by you, to try yourselves, preside at your own trial, sit as a jury in your own behalf, with a verdict written in advance of the trial. That is not the way we have been taught that public business should be done in Iowa and in America."

URGE SIX-HOUR DAY

Glens Falls, N. Y., Aug. 4.—A six-hour working day and a six-day working week were advocated as a solution to the present unemployment situation by John Sullivan, president of the State Federation of Labor, at the convention of the State Printing Trades Council.

The trade unionist declared that less hours is the solution for labor displacement through improved machinery.

OLD-TIME UNIONIST PASSES

Chicago, Aug. 4.—Robert L. Nelson, old-time trade unionist, died in this city. His was 72 years old. He was one of the founders of the Iron Molders' Union and was president of the Chicago Labor Assembly, which preceded the present Chicago Federation of Labor. He served as director of the World's Fair, held in this city in 1893 and was the last member of that group of citizens.

MORE FIVE-DAY-WEEK LOGIC

One hundred Southern cotton mills have shut down because of over-production of narrow sheetings.

The American Bar Association wants Congress to exempt oil producers from anti-trust law penalties when they agree to limit production.

Dr. George Otis Smith, director United States Geological Survey, again declares that this country is "over-engined" and that "supply is ever ahead of demand with little hope and expectation of capacity orders."

Three years ago the Wall Street Journal, a financial authority, stated (September 1, 1925, issue):

The country today can turn out more steel, more coal, more copper, more oil, more automobiles, etc., than the demand calls for. If all of these industries permitted capacity production, prosperity would be short lived.

Revolutionary changes have been wrought since 1925. Mo automatic machinery, new processes, increased efficiency of labo and a scientific management that includes the smallest economi are all unanswerable proof that the five-day week is necessary.

Employers who deny this claim dare not operate their plan 100 per cent capacity.

TRUTH WILL OUT

The British government announces that at least 200,000 jobless must either be moved out of that country or starv..

The report should be read by cracker-barrel economists and penny-a-liner writers in the United States who would solve the British out-of-work problem by the flippant declaration that the "dole" is responsible. They refer to the unemployment insurance act, and they would create the impression that workers shirk employment because they have access to the national treasury.

The British report refutes this claim as "wholly without foundation," and states that "the body of unemployed is not a standing army of loafers." The situation is traceable wholly to economic conditions, it is said.

The British unemployment insurance act is in no sense a charity, and is not called the "dole" in Britain.

The fund is maintained by joint contributions by employers, employed and the government. For male workers, the weekly contribution is 8 pence (16 cents) by the employer, 7 pence by the worker and 3 pence by the government.

Stringent rules govern distribution of funds. No striker can receive benefits, and if a worker who draws this insurance refuses employment his insurance ceases. A worker is limited to the number of weeks he may draw this insurance.

BLANTON DEFEATED; LOST SENATE FIGHT

Washington, Aug. 4.—Congressman Blanton lost his fight for the United States Senate, and the fiery Texas anti-unionist passes out of the legislative picture for at least two years, with the end of the present Congress, in March, next year.

Blanton has been in Congress 12 years. This year he elected to run for the Senate and was overwhelmingly beaten.

Blanton joined the anti-union movement that swept the country following the World War. Colleagues of Washington and Myers of Montana were daily urging their colleagues in the Senate to make Coolidge look like an offense, Governor Allen of Kansas was touring the nation to popularize his notorious anti-strike law, and the newspapers and publicists joined in the cry.

Organized labor fought off these foes until the public realized the menace of handcuffing workers to their employment.

Blanton capitalized this outcry and his attacks on the trade union movement were both numerous and vicious. In those days he was known as "Bleating Blanton." Later, as public sentiment shifted, he changed his policy but not his principles.

He is an able parliamentarian and fought many single-handed fights in the House. His best piece of constructive work was when he drove from public office a Commissioner of the District of Columbia whom he exposed as grafting on helpless war veterans who were confined in a local hospital for mental incompetents.

WOULD BREAK PLEDGE WITH CAR EMPLOYES

Des Moines, Iowa, Aug. 4.—The local street car company is attempting to annul a union agreement which calls for two-man cars. The State Supreme Court upheld the contract, but the company pleads poverty.

"If the company can squeeze some of the water out of its stock it would not be necessary to squeeze us out," said E. Ben Wiley, secretary of the Street Car Men's Union. One-fifth of the company's stock is "water," according to Wiley.

HUGE AUTO PROFITS

New York, Aug. 4.—The General Motors Corporation broke all profit records during the first six months of this year.

Net earnings totaled $161,267,974, as against $129,280,267, or 24.8 per cent less, during the same period last year.

This is the largest gain by any American company and probably establishes a new world record for any industrial.

TEAPOT DOME OUTFIT WILL BE AUCTIONED

Washington, Aug. 4.—The Navy Department will auction $200,000 worth of equipment installed on the Teapot Dome naval oil reserve by the Sinclair interests for the purpose of taking out oil.

This marks the end of the Teapot Dome scandal that was exposed through a Senate resolution introduced by the late Senator La Follette. The fight was carried to the United States Supreme Court and the oil lands were ordered returned to the government.

Teapot Dome was originally placed under control of the Navy Department by an act of Congress. President Harding transferred control to the Department of the Interior and Secretary of the Interior Fall leased the reserve to Sinclair. The courts held this transfer illegal.

The long court proceedings revealed many prominent persons connected with the scandal, but all have escaped conviction. Fall is still under indictment for criminal conspiracy.

DEBS' JUDGE IS DEAD

Cleveland, Aug. 4.—Federal Judge David C. Westenhaver, who presided at the trial of the late Eugene V. Debs, convicted of alleged seditious utterances during the World War, died in this city. His age was 63.

He was appointed to the bench in 1917 by President Wilson. Prior to this he was a member of the Cleveland Board of Education and became involved in a controversy with teachers who would organize.

PARTYISM CRIPPLED BY MISSOURI RULING

Jefferson City, Mo., Aug. 4.—Voters of this state may reject the primary choice of their respective parties without losing their standing as members of that party, rules Attorney General Stratton Shartel.

"Voters have a right, constitutionally, statutory and otherwise," said the attorney general, "to vote their party ticket in the state primary and then vote as they see fit in the election."

The voter's future intentions as to how he will vote in the general election can not be questioned by election officials. The fact that he voted one ticket in the primary will not preclude him from voting as he sees fit in the general election.

"Our Supreme Court has said that the election shall be free and open and that our statutes in this regard are statutes of regulation only and not statutes of prohibition.

"This opinion carries out the letter as well as the entire scheme and spirit of our election laws. Any other holding would be contrary to sound public policy."

WOULD FEED WORLD WITHOUT THE FARM

Chicago, Aug. 4.—Science has confounded economists who defended the Malthusian doctrine, promulgated in England in the eighteenth century, that population multiplies faster than subsistence and that disaster will overtake the world unless population is checked.

This doctrine has been one of the most hotly contested questions in social science, but chemists now declare that the world can be fed without the farm.

Professor H. E. Barnard told members of the American Chemical Society Institute that the chemist is impatient when he hears the Malthusian doctrine discussed in terms of wheat acreage, sugars and fats.

"The chemist is confident," said Prof. Barnard, "that when the earth's fertile fields do not produce crops sufficient for man's needs, the scientist can synthesize them in his laboratory. Indeed he is already doing that.

"When the need comes, the chemist will direct the light of the sun and nitrogen into food for the human family. Thirty men working in a factory the size of a city block can produce, in the form of yeast, as much food as 10,000 men tilling 57,000 acres under ordinary agricultural conditions.

"For all science is concerned, the entire surface of the globe might in the future be covered with kitchens and apartments—and there will be no use for the kitchenette. The process of human metabolism, conversion of elementary substances into heat and bodily energy, will continue."

OUT-OF-WORK FIGURES INDICATE INCREASE

Washington, Aug. 4.—Figures published in American Federationist, current issue, show that unemployment among organized wage earners decreased 2 per cent in 24 cities during June as compared with May.

Preliminary figures for July indicate that unemployment among the same group of wage workers is increasing, as compared with figures for June. Unemployment during the first half of 1928 was:

	All Trades. Per Cent.	Building Trades. Per Cent.	All Other Trades. Per Cent.
January	18	36	11
February	18	39	10
March	18	38	10
April	16	32	9
May	13	27	8
June	11	22	7

SLOW-DOWN SYSTEM FAVORED BY LAWYERS

Seattle, Aug. 4.—The American Bar Association approved a bill which would permit oil well owners to produce less.

The bill would provide that an agreement between oil producers for a curtailment of oil drilling and the pumping of oil shall be deemed not a violation of the anti-trust laws.

Business Controls Ohio University; Free Discussion Rests On Faculty

Chicago, Aug. 4.—Teachers themselves are responsible for the absence of academic freedom, declared the convention of the American Federation of Teachers in a statement on the dismissal of Wesley H. Maurer, assistant professor of journalism in Ohio University, at Athens, Ohio, for holding liberal views.

He was dropped from the faculty without trial or hearing. He was also discharged from his position as city-district editor of the Athens Messenger, a daily paper in that city.

When the bituminous strike started he undertook to report correctly what was happening but pressure began to be applied to prevent the reports being printed.

Business and professional men of Athens held a meeting for the purpose of ending the strike. When the collection of funds was discussed, Mr. Maurer asked what was to be done with the funds and whether the purpose was to assist the strikers. He was assailed with cries of "throw him out." A committee called on the newspaper publisher and demanded Mr. Maurer's immediate discharge on the ground that he was hindering the progress of the strike.

"It is the view of the American Federation of Teachers that the control of the universities by enterprises of the business of teachers constitutes an intolerable situation," the convention declared. "There can be no freedom in teaching, and there can be no freedom of thought of discussion in connection with social problems when college trustees are allowed to seize control and bring about dismissal of teachers whose ideas do not please them.

"While condemning the action of the trustees of Ohio University for their arbitrary action in dismissing teachers for their views, we insist that the responsibility for the continuance of the suppression of freedom in education rests on teachers themselves, through their failure to insist on academic freedom."

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Country Faces Overproduction; "Too Much Efficiency" Is Cause

Seattle, Aug. 4.—In an address to the mineral section of the American Bar Association, George Otis Smith, director of the United States Geological Survey, again insisted that this country is "over-engined" and that "100 per cent efficiency" can not be thought of.

"Too much is being invested with an excess of production," he said. "Progress, so-called, may overstep reason. Most of our industries are overgrown. Supply is ever ahead of demand with little hope and expectation of capacity orders.

"Under these chronic conditions neither 100 per cent efficiency nor a full measure of economy can be thought of."

Speaking specifically of the mining industry, Dr. Smith said this industry has grown too fast, and that men best informed in coal, copper, oil, lead, zinc and steel "keenly realize the ever-present hazard of overproduction."

"The power to slow down industry," continued the federal scientist, "is a safety measure urgently needed at this time of high-speed development and mass production, needed in both the industry's own and the public interest.

"The American habit of 'stepping on the gas' has brought the mineral industry close to the danger line.

"The dangers incident to an overestimated growth and an excess capacity are not special and local, but general and country-wide. Indeed, the present excess of production capacity is a liability common to the balance sheets of most branches of industry."

CHILDREN OF WORKLESS FATHERS SUFFER MOST, SAYS U. S. BUREAU

Washington, Aug. 4.—The United States Children's Bureau paints a tragic picture of the effects of unemployment on the home, as a result of its study of Racine, Wis., and Springfield, Mass.

More than two-thirds of the fathers investigated in the two cities had been out of work for more than a year.

"The hardships that must be endured by a family when the father is out of work continue when conditions improve and he again has a steady job," the report states. "The savings of years have been used to provide maintenance during months of enforced idleness, perhaps the home whose purchase represented the fulfillment of the family's ambitions has been sacrificed. For months after the father secures work his wages will have to be divided between the purchase of the necessaries of life and the payment of the heavy burden of debt. Many of the fathers interviewed had little hope of successfully taking up again the task of providing a home and comforts for those dependent upon them.

"Besides the deprivation of material means, and lowered family standards, the anxiety can perhaps only be understood by those who have themselves been the victims of the dread uncertainty and fear that bewets a workingman's family when the father is 'laid off.' The most important feature of unemployment is the effect on the family morale—the father idle about the house, unsettled, disheartened; the mother trying out to work if she can secure it, and using up every bit of her strength in the double task of providing for the family's maintenance and caring for the household and the children; the children suffering from the depression and uncertainty of what the future may mean, which is even more to be dreaded than the discomforts of the immediate present.

"Unemployment, then, because it means lowered family standards, anxiety and dread, the loss of savings and the mortgaging of the future, has a direct and disastrous effect upon the welfare of children. While communities are usually able to organize their resources so that children are not removed from their own homes because of poverty caused by an industrial crisis, these resources have not been sufficient to prevent very real suffering to family groups stricken with the misfortune of loss of work by the father."

LABOR-LAND CONTEST IS FACTOR IN MEXICO

Washington, Aug. 4.—A sidelight on an underlying cause of present conditions in Mexico is shown in this July 26 Associated Press dispatch from Mexico City, in which reference is made to Luis Morones, head of the Mexican Federation of Labor, who resigned from President Calles' cabinet:

"Raphael Mallen, one of the agrarian leaders, asked to explain the Morones-Obregon feud, and the dislike of the agrarians for the laborites, replied:

"Morones organized the city workers. Obregon organized the farmers. These groups do not have common interests and they became opposing groups.

"The agrarians regard Morones as the mouthpiece in Mexico of the American Federation of Labor, the Mexican viceroy of Gompers and Green, and therefore a typical Mexican.

"Obregon did not have connections with farmer organizations outside of Mexico. He was not a traitor. He represented Mexicans only.

"That's why Obregon's farmer following opposed and oppose Morones' town workers."

WILL RAILWAYS' PLUM BRING ECONOMY TALK?

Washington, Aug. 4.—Will a presidential protest come from the Interstate Commerce Commission's action in awarding railroads an additional $15,000,000 annually for hauling mail?

The award is retroactive to 1925 and comes out of the postal revenues.

When Congress passed a 10 per cent wage increase for postal night workers, the President vetoed the bill because of a "postal deficit." This statute is also retroactive and totaled less than one-half what the railroads will receive. The justness of the increase was not denied, but objection was based on the alleged deficit which the commission ignores.

The carriers justify their claim on changed conditions. Formerly, mail hauled by the railroads consisted of first-class letters and second-class matter. The railroads are now handling light freight parcel post packages up to 70 pounds in weight.

IRON MOLDERS ESCAPE ANTI-UNION FRAME-UP

Detroit, Aug. 4.—Strikebreakers employed by the Peninsular Stove Company failed to secure the conviction of nine striking iron molders. The unionists picketed the plant. When the strikebreakers told their story of alleged assault, Judge Gagneau of the River Rouge Police Court dismissed the defendants without asking them to testify.

The Peninsula company is one of the oldest stove manufacturers in the country. The firm maintained relations with the Iron Molders' Union for more than half a century, but recently announced anti-union conditions.

STATE UNIONS TO MEET

Springfield, Ill., Aug. 4.—The executive board of the State Federation of Labor selected Herrin as the next convention city. The convention will convene on Tuesday, November 8.

CRIME WAVE CAUSED BY BOOZE INDUSTRY

Seattle, Aug. 4.—Growing lack of confidence in the integrity of all public officials because of "bribery and corruption in public office" by bootleg money was depicted in a report read to the criminal law section of the American Bar Association.

The author, Arthur V. Lashly of St. Louis, conducted an official investigation for that group of lawyers.

The report, based on opinions of officials, publishers and law enforcement agents in many large cities, placed "the real problem of crime and failure of justice in the large parts of the country" directly at the door of the bootlegging industry.

"Bribery and corruption have become common occurrences because the cupidity of politicians and state and government officials generally have been excited by the enormous profits of bootlegging, which being unlawful are considered legitimate prey."

By-products of the illegal industry—the thug, bombing and hi-jacking gangs—often utilize their spare moments in influencing elections by terrorism and in extortion schemes, Lashly said.

"Many murders, hold-ups and other major crimes are directly chargeable to this source."

DOUBTS IF PUBLIC RESPECTS LAWYER

New York, Aug. 4.—Federal Judge William H. Atwell of Texas does not accept the view that laymen revere lawyers.

At a luncheon of the Federal Bar Association, the southern jurist said: "I do not share the view that the profession of law is honored or revered by laymen, either now nor in the past. History shows that it has been weighed and found wanting. I really think that the public disgust at the administration of law is traceable to the unethical conduct of lawyers."

WINNING FIVE-DAY WEEK

Portland, Ore., Aug. 4.—The five-day week is being quietly established by building contractors in this city. Painters, bricklayers and electrical workers have five-day week agreements.

MINERS JOINING UNION

Denver, Aug. 4.—Miners in the northern part of the state are joining the United Mine Workers. The I. W. W. are disappearing since the collapse of their recent strike.

SURPLUS LABOR IN WEST

San Francisco, Aug. 4.—Government authorities, state officials and trade unionists agree there is a surplus of labor in all lines of industry in this city.